

government-subsidized childcare, free preschool, free community college. Free, free, free; that seems to be the slogan of this administration.

Of course, we all know that there is no such thing as free in this country. I have talked before about the fact that President Biden has proposed 30—you heard me right, 30—new taxes that the Democrats can choose from to pay for these free programs in their next spending package—30 new taxes during a pandemic.

According to one analysis by the Hoover Institution, President Biden's American Families Plan would add 21 million Americans to the Federal Government's list of beneficiaries—21—21 million more people living off the government. Now, there are certainly people out there who need help. We all know that. But this plan opens the floodgates to taxpayer-funded benefits instead of concentrating on those who mostly need it. Under President Biden's plan, your family could make up to \$200,000 and still qualify for Federal healthcare—\$200,000.

We don't have to comb through the history books for examples on how these progressive policies fail. We don't have to look far. Just look at what we have done here recently and the insistence on keeping unemployment benefits historically high.

My Republican colleagues and I have spoken about how these misguided benefits essentially paid people not to work, destroying small businesses all over the country, and our economy's progress has gone down as we try to recover from this pandemic.

Republican Governors across the country recognized the problem and decided to cut out the overly generous benefits months ago. Folks who needed help would get it, but they wouldn't be paid to sit at home, and then they wouldn't be sitting home when they could have been working at jobs that would help their family. Just about every Democratic Governor has insisted on keeping these benefits. Now, what does that tell you, insisting on keeping the benefits and not keeping the benefits?

We have made some terrible decisions just in a short period of time. Well, we can already see the results of what is happening with these benefits. According to the monthly data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, States that cut the Federal expanded benefit are closer to returning to prepandemic employment levels than the States that kept them. Thirteen of the top 15 States with the best unemployment numbers have all ended their Federal expanded unemployment insurance.

Why don't we learn from this misguided policy and not repeat it by spending money on bad outcomes? We seem to continue to do that every time we turn around.

The reckless tax-and-spend spree to advance President Biden's progressive agenda isn't just unaffordable; it is un-American. The United States was

founded on the ideas of personal liberty and self-reliance. It makes you feel good about yourself earning your own way, not government handouts best known as socialism.

Since our founding, people have flocked to the United States because of the opportunity it gives citizens to succeed, not because of cushy government handouts. Our society valued and values hard work, grit, and determination more than the countries most of these folks have left behind.

Again, this country owes you one thing and that is an opportunity to succeed through education and hard work. Democrats want you to believe that you can only succeed with the government's help. Republicans believe in self-reliance and that you have within you God-given skills and potential to work hard and succeed. You have that. That is what this country gives you, which is why President Biden's reckless spending spree and expansion of government programs is so, so disappointing.

The President and Democrats think success is measured by how much taxpayer money the government can spend, but real success is measured by how many people no longer need the help in the first place. Our efforts need to empower people to be free to live and work to build a better life for themselves and their families. The most successful anti-poverty program should eventually put itself out of business.

So I say, enough. Enough of continuously growing the Federal Government. Enough of the reckless taxpayer-funded spending sprees. Enough of trapping people in a cycle of dependence, because a culture of dependency is a culture in decline.

I say we work together to encourage people to seize the many opportunities in our country, not have them wait around hoping the government will fix every problem life throws their way. We can't do that. It is long past time we get back to teaching folks to fish, to learn to fish themselves, to be self-reliant. That is a culture of hard work and resilience. That is a culture of the United States of America, the best country on the face of the Earth.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHINA

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, this has already been a big week in Tokyo for Team USA, and I hope all of my colleagues have the opportunity to watch a few minutes of the Olympic Games over the next few weeks.

Every year, we hear so much from commentators and athletes about how

the Games are an opportunity for the world to come together, and that is exactly how it once was. Unfortunately, the Olympics are also a target-rich environment for people and regimes that want to use these rare moments of unity to trick the world into ignoring evil.

Before we were able to enjoy any of this year's double-pike vaults or 400-meter freestyle swims, we were already worrying about the impending havoc casting a shadow over the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

Late last year, the Chinese Government began pilot testing a new digital currency that will inevitably knock other domestic mobile payment systems out of the marketplace.

The digital yuan trial has already pulled in \$5.3 billion—that is correct, \$5.3 billion—in transactions, and this month we learned that cross-border payments are also on the table. In fact, the trial has been so successful that Beijing wants to expand testing at the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Now, as much as I would like to believe that this is an innocent effort to bring the world a little closer together, this is the Chinese Communist Party that we are talking about, and we shouldn't expect good faith because that is not what we are going to get from the CCP. We have reason to believe that the Chinese Government intends to use the digital yuan to conduct a massive surveillance operation on Chinese citizens and foreign visitors.

It wouldn't be the first time something like this happened. The CCP has an unfortunate history of weaponizing emerging technologies against people they would like to control. They used it against the Uighurs, against freedom fighters in Hong Kong, and on the mainland against anyone who questions their party propaganda.

They are already using digital payment platforms to spy on their own people; and if we are not careful, they are going to use them to spy on Team USA.

This month, I sent a letter to the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee asking them to forbid our athletes from accepting or using the digital yuan while competing in Beijing.

The threats are changing, and far too often we see our allies and partners and even our own government ignoring those threats to preserve the status quo.

You may be asking yourself: Why is so much of the world willing to look the other way when confronted with genocide in Xinjiang or murdered protesters in Hong Kong?

It is because speaking up can be dangerous, especially when it comes to challenging the CCP.

China boasts the most in-demand market in the world. In fact, it is such a gold mine that you will recall the NBA ignored large-scale child abuse at its training camps in China just to maintain access to broadcast advertising and merchandise revenue.

Through the Belt and Road Initiative, the Chinese Communist Party has sunk its teeth into some of the most valuable tourist destinations on the face of the Earth, on trade route, and strategic outposts.

They have sold this program as an economic development initiative, but in reality this debt-trap diplomacy is really just an extortion scheme. Once these countries fall into the trap, it is almost impossible to escape.

Even before the pandemic forced the United States into lockdown, I and several other of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle were ringing alarm bells about our supply chain security. China is the most dominant global source of rare Earth minerals, technology infrastructure, and many active pharmaceutical ingredients.

Long story short, there is a lot on the line for the people of the United States. The cards are stacked against us.

It would be really easy to protect that valuable status quo by ignoring human rights violations and extortion schemes and other overt attempts to make the world a little less free. But as much as we would like it to be, freedom is not humanity's natural state. It is fragile. It falls victim to the weak and the power hungry alike, and, if we are not careful, yes, it will slip away, like it has in so many other countries.

Freedom does have to be fought for, and we need our leaders to set the example. That means staying focused on not following the example of countries that have given up their freedom. We don't want to live out the authoritarian nightmare that the CCP has created, but we also want to avoid becoming like nations that have already pawned their futures in pursuit of some grand socialist future.

I fear that our new majority has already lost touch with what the American people actually want. They sure don't want what the Biden administration has been selling lately. I can definitely tell you that after a weekend in Tennessee. They don't feel taken care of. What they are feeling is that they are being manipulated.

They want to know why President Biden and the Democratic majority keep trying to pawn off the freedom that makes us an example to the rest of the world in exchange for more government control that nobody asked for.

I would encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to remember that the American people entrusted them with the power that they are wasting on these radical wish lists items, and that power can be taken away just as easily as it was given.

The American people want to make certain that we do as Ronald Reagan implored us to remember. And, Madam President, as you know, last week I had that poster here on the floor. Freedom is always one generation away from extinction. It is our responsibility to fight for it, to pass it on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 257.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gwynne A. Wilcox, of New York, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2023.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 257, Gwynne A. Wilcox, of New York, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2023.

Charles E. Schumer, Tammy Baldwin, Tim Kaine, Patty Murray, Tina Smith, Jacky Rosen, Christopher Murphy, Cory A. Booker, Mark R. Warner, Brian Schatz, Sherrod Brown, Sheldon Whitehouse, Raphael Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Jeanne Shaheen, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 258.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of David M. Prouty, of Maryland, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2026.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 258, David M. Prouty, of Maryland, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2026.

Charles E. Schumer, Tammy Baldwin, Tim Kaine, Patty Murray, Tina Smith, Jacky Rosen, Christopher Murphy, Cory A. Booker, Mark R. Warner, Brian Schatz, Sherrod Brown, Sheldon Whitehouse, Raphael Warnock, Michael F. Bennet, Jeanne Shaheen, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, July 26, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 122, Todd Sunhwa Kim, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jeff Merkley, Patty Murray, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Gary C. Peters, Angus S. King, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Lujan, Jack Reed, Chris Van Hollen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Todd Sunhwa Kim, of the District